

**A**  
**SERMON OF**  
*fasting, and of Lent, and*  
*of the antiquitie, dignitie,*  
*and great necessitie thereof.*  
Preached vpon the 14. of  
*Februarie, anno 1607.*  
*at Shafesbury.*

By  
Io. MAYO.

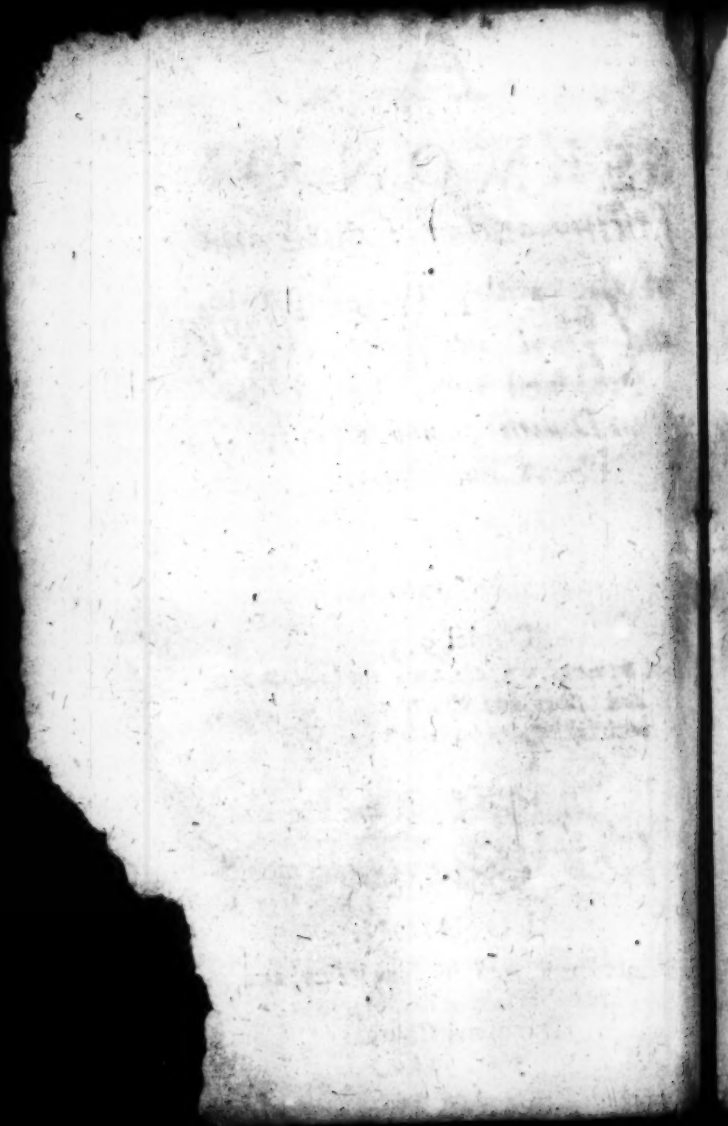
Daniel 9. 3.

*And I turned my face vnto the Lord GOD,  
and sought by Praier and Supplications,  
with fasting, and sackecloth, and ashes.*



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*To the right Worshipfull*  
**WILLIAM WILKS** Doctor  
*in Diuinitie, and one of his Ma.*  
**iesties Chaplaines in ordinarie:**  
*And to the Worshipfull Maior*  
**and Recorder of the Borough**  
*of Shafiesbury; and to the*  
**Masters and Burgeffes of**  
*the same.*



Here, was neuer any age  
that bragged more of  
knowledge, and yer, ne-  
uer any that had lesse  
soundnes. For as the harts  
of men were neuer more  
empty, and their hands  
neuer more idle: so their  
tongues were neuer more stirring, and their  
braines neuer more stuffed: nor so much stu-  
dying to doe what they know, as to find what  
they may beleeue: being like to those *Pyrra-*  
*nian* Philosophers, or *Scepticks* of whom *A.*

## THE EPISTLE

*Gellius* writeth Lib. 11. Cap. 5. who would alwayes seeke and consider, but neuer decree, appoint, nor comprehend any thing ; but only according to their owne fantasie, and the depth of their owne capacity. Some thinke, that Gods schoole is more of vnderstanding than affection ; and they endeavour to haue much knowledge though it bee without zeale, and to get much skill, though it bee without loyall obedience and good gouernment. It is not sufficient for such to bee of Gods court, but they will be of his counsell also. They will needs prie into his Arke ; inquire into things not reueled ; and be puffed vp, and be wise in themselues ; teaching, preaching, and perswading that, which tendeth rather to liberty, fancy, and selfe-will, than to praier, fasting, almes and mortification of the flesh. Yea, and not content with that, they deprauce and traduce others that follow not their owne humors and opinions therein ; and speake of them, not humbly as *Judas* said of an offender Gen. 38. 10. *She is more righteous than I: but hatefully and without peace, as Iosephs brethren did of him.* Gen. 37. 4.

The reason and occasion why and wherefore I write this, may soone bee vnderstood, both of you, who are a teacher in the Church, and haue had great experience of this creeping and encroaching euill : and of you also, who beare publike office and authority in the common-wealth, hauing scene the pangs and practises of these kind of people ; still murmuring and muttering against princely proceed-



## DEDICATORIE

dings in eccleasticall gouernment, and against things in themselves indifferent, but by authority necessary, as commanded by his Maiesty. It is charities precept to speake well of all; and Ciuilities rule not to backbite the absent. And yet we see, that some of them consider of other mens doings, that tend to forme, order and decencie, As Satan considered of *Iob*, and his actions, when God said vnto him; *Hast thou considered my seruant Iob?* And he signified yea, but it was to belie & calumniare him. And although we now see the staffe of our bread broken, and the euill arrowes of death and famine sent amongst vs, to make vs humble our selues before the almighty God of heauen, with fasting, praier, and repentance: yet they can not be brought to obserue and keepe any time and season of abstinence and fasting, commanded by authority, but they will rather hazard an opposition to the peace of the church, and to the good of their cuntry, than suffer their appetites to be bridled, and their zeale to be guided by the limits of any good lawes.

The consideration of this matter hath moued mee to publish this Sermon, and to dedicate it, both to you, whom for many causes I respect & reuerence, & whose fauour and kindness I haue found in no small measure; and to al you also, who haue shewed your loue and countenance towards me, not only in hearing patiently, but in construing courteously, that which is now come to the generall view of others. Accept of it I pray, and take it as com-

## THE EPISTLE

ming from him, who wisheth you all increase  
of happinesse, and all grace mer-  
cy, and peace in Christ  
IESVS.

Shaftesbury the 28. of Novemb. ber. 1609

Your

Worships most assured

to be commanded

IO. MAYO.





Psal. 69. 10.

*I wept, and chastened my selfe with fasting, and that was turned to my reproofe.*



**I**n this booke of the Psalmes is a booke Sapientall: set forth vnto vs by the holy Ghost, and doth serue for manie and diuers purposes. Some of the Psalmes serue for musicke, as we may know by their title. Some for Praiers, some for Thanksgiuing, some for Consolation, some for Doctrine, some for Prophecie, & some for Storie. All to this end and purpose, to giue vnto vs present remedies against troubles and temptations of the mind and conscience, and to make vs liue in the true faith, feare and loue of the Lord.

David the sonne of Ishai, a man according to Gods owne heart, was called the sweet Psalmist of Israel; who not onely made Psalmes himselve, but ordained wise and skilfull men to make Psalmes, and to prophesie with all kind of instruments, as Asaph, and his sonnes: Corah, & his sons: Heman, and his sonnes: Jeduthan, and his sonnes. Which Psalmes, or prayes according to the Hebrewes, were chiefly ordained to praise God, & to giue him thanks for his blessings and benefits; and are called the Psalmes or the songs of David, because the most part of them were made by him.

This Psalme, in which my text is contained, was made by David, and is called *in iuxta*, a wishing song or Psalme: and of Apollinarius, *ymnus cordis amissionis*, a song of a converted heart; & it doeth containe specially two parts: first, a petition from the 1. verse to the 30. Secondly, a praise-full conclusion from the 30. verse to the end of the Psalme.

Psalme. For the Prophet David being atype of Christ giue of God, doeth seeme to haue witten this Psalme in the name of Christ and of his Church, euen as the Evangelicall historie doeth shew it; & as the Apostles theselues do apply it.

These words which I haue read vnto you being witten in the 10. verse, doe containe in them two parts, 1. An Action of David. 2. A construction of that action by others. An action of David, consisting of his passion & Mortification. Of his passion, in these words, I wept. Of his mortification, in these words, And chastened my selfe with fasting. The construction of the Actiō, in these words; And this was turned to my reproofe.

I wept (saith David). He wept not heere as he did for Abner, or as hee did for the death of his sonne Ammon. He wept not here as hee did when he fled from his sonne Absolon, or as hee did for the death of his sonne Absolon. Hee wept not heere as Iacob did for his sonne Joseph.

Iosep, or as Ezekiah did when hee heard he should die; but hee wept here as Peter did when he had denied his master, and as Josiah did when he heard the words of the booke of the Law. Hee wept with care, with compunction, and with contrition of heart, for his sinnes and offences, committed against the Lord, even as hee did in Psalm. 6. 6. where he saith: Euenie night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my teares.

I wept, saith David, being a Prophet, a Prince, and the seruant of the Lord. A thing not unfitting, nor vnseemely for a Prophet, a Prince, & the seruant of the Lord in such a case. Because such kind of weeping is a signe of true and heartie repentance; It is the fruit of passion, a token of a broken heart, and (as S. Basill saith,) the food of the soule. And therefore the Lord himselfe saith by his Prophet Joel 2. 12. Turne vnto me (saith hee) with all your heart, and with Fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And our Saviour Chzist himselfe saith

saith Luke 6. 21. Blessed are yee that now weepe, for ye shall laugh. And the Apostle S. Iames saith to the wicked rich men, Chap. 5. 1. Goe to now, ye rich men, weepe and howle for your miseries that shall come vpon you.

And chastened my selfe with fasting: In some translations, I wept, & my soule fasted: as it is in psal. 35. 13. Leuit. 23. 27. And as Apollinarius bp. on this psalme saith:

κατελάμαρ τῶν κατελάμαρ θυμὸν ἡμῶν:

I haue broken or subdued my soule with the labours or sweates of fasting.

The Prophet Dauid not onely wept, and shewed his passion. but chastened himselfe with fasting, & shewed his mortification. So did the Apostle S. Paul, as he himselfe writeth, 1. Cor. 9. 27. But I doe chasten and beate downe this my bodie, and bring it into subiection: why? Lest when I haue Preached to others, I my selfe should be reprov'd. So did the prophet Daniel, as wee may read, Cha 10. 3 where he saith: I was in heauinesse for three weeks of dales. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, So did

that blessed Hilarion, as S. Hierom writeth in his life, who would say vnto his bodie, thus, as S. Hierom there relateth: Ego (Asine) faciam te vt non calcitres. O thou Asse, (said Hilarion to his bodie) I will make thee that thou kicke not. I will feed thee, not with barlie, but with chaff. I will tyre thee with hunger, I will load thee with great thirst, I will bring thee ouer heats & coldes, that thou shalt rather thinke vpon thy meate than wantonnesse.

Wherewith did the Prophet Dauid chasten himselfe with fasting. I wept, and chastened my selfe with fasting. So he did in psalme 109.23. where he saith: My knees are weake through fasting, & my flesh is dried vp for lacke of farnesse. So did the children of Israel in the house of the Lord. Iudg. 20.26. So did Anna the daughter of Phanuel in the Temple of the Lord. Luke 2.37. So Dauid and his men wept and fasted till euen, for Saul and for Jonathan his sonne, for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel,



rael, because they were slaine with the sword, 2. Sam. 1. 12. And so David himselfe fasted, praised, and lay all night vpon the earth for the childes life. 2. Samuel 12. 16.

Some thinke that abstinence and fasting are one and the same, because they are both imployed about the same matter, and manie times the one is taken for the other. And some thinke that to fast, is nothing else but to liue soberly and conueniently to nature. Abstinence euen as temperance, doth bind euery man to keepe and obserue it. For as it is not fit for any man at any time to liue intemperately, so it is not meet for any mā to admit that which is against true abstinence, because we ought to eat and drinke no more than reason willet, or necessitie of nature requireth.

Fasting doeth not bind all, nor alwayes, but some onely in their time and place. For most certaine it is that our Saviour Christ and

his apostles, with many others both before and after them lived soberlie and conueniently to nature, and yet they not alwayes fasted. For if they had alwayes fasted, our Saviour Christ would  
 Luke 3.25. neuer haue said: The bridegosome shall bee taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those dayes,

And that was turned to my reproofe. Here is the Construction. David was repproued for his weeping, and for chastening himselfe with fasting. By whom? By his enemies, who would destroy him guiltlesse, and were mightie. Psal. 69.4. By his enemies, who spake against him, testified vpon him, and being drunke, made songs vpon him. It hath not alwayes bene a fault, but a fashion for wicked men to repproue and reprobend vertue & veritie in good men. And therefore Iudas grudged at Mary Magdalen for breaking of the hore of ointment, and for powring it on Iesus head. Mark. 14.4. The Pharisees  
 re.

reproued Christs Disciples to his face for plucking the eares of Corne vpon the Sabbaoth day, Matth. 12, 1. And our Saviour Christ himselfe was mocked, scoffed at, scorned, scandalized, reproched, reproued and reuiled by the Iewes, by the Scribes, and others, and told that he was a friend to Publicanes and sinners, and that hee had in him Belzebub the prince of the Devils. Marke 3. 22.

In the time of the heathen, the Cynicke Diogenes despised all things: the Philosopher Democritus laughed at all things: the Philosopher Heraclitus wept at all things: the Philosopher Aristotle thought hee knew all things: and the carping god Momus blamed and reproued all things. Enuie and reprove doe alwaies waite at vertues elbow. For Isboſeth shall neuer want a man in his owne campe, Elah a seruant in his owne house, and Dauid a sonne from

from his owne loines, besides Achitophels, Doegs, and Shimees, not onely to reprove him & reprehend him, but to worke treason and treacherie against him. And therefore the Orator saith well in his first Paradoxe, *Ista omnia talia videmus*: We see all such things, that also wicked men haue wealth, and do hurt the good. And the Prophet David saith truly, Psalm. 11. 2. The vngodly bend their bowe, and make readie their arrowes within their quiver, that they may priuily shoote at them which are true of heart. Thus much of the phrase. The Matter, as I said before, is an Actiō of David consisting of his Passiō, and his Mortification: & a Cōstruction of that Action by others. In the Actiō, I haue thought good to obserue these fīue particulars.

1. What Fasting is.
2. How manie sorts of Fasting there are.
3. The effects of Fasting.
4. The causes of fasting.
5. The antiquitie, dignitie and necessitie of Fasting.

In the Construction of the Action I haue thought good to obserue three Particulars, and two Questions.

The 1. Particular, what Lent is.

2. By whom it was first ordained.

3. To what end and purpose it was ordained.

The 1. Question; Whether set daies, and times of abstinence and fasting, ought to bee commaunded by authoritie.

The other Question: Whether it bee a sinne wilfully to breake and to despise set dayes and times of abstinence and fasting commaunded by authoritie.

Fasting (as some define it) is a proper acte of Abstinence, or a certaine peculiar manner of Abstinence. As other some define it, It is a Parsimonie of liuing, and an Abstinence of meates. Tertullian saith: That it is a worke of reuerence towards God.

Gregorie lib. 5. Moral. saith: That it is, *Quando quis pro amore Dei, &c.* When any one for the loue of God and

his owne health doeth abstaine, not onely from things vnlawfull, but from things lawfull and graunted.

That reuerend Bishop Iewel of Salisbury of famous memory, saith: That it is a religious worke ordained to testifie our humilitie, and to make the flesh the more obedient to the Spirit, that wee may bee the quicker to Praier and to all good works. A late excellent and exquisite Diuine of ours, saith: That it is an helpe and furthurance to the worship of God, & a good worke if it be vsed in a good manner. For (saith he) it is a worke allowed of God, and highly to be esteemed of all his people and his seruants. The Greckes will haue it to be called *nictia*, of *ni* and *ictia* of not eating, or of eating nothing at all. And the Latines will haue it to bee called *Ieiunium*, ab intestino ieiuno, because with hunger the bowels are voyd and empty.

In the holy Scripture wee find 4 sorts of fasts.

1. A miraculous fast.
2. A fast from euill works,

Perkins  
Reform.  
Cathol.  
pag. 222.

3. A penitentiall fast,

4. A fast from sursetting,

Moses, Elias, and our Saviour Christ himselſe vsed the Miraculous fast; for they fasted 40. dayes and forty nights.

Of the fast from Euil works, the Prophet Esay writeth, Chap. 58. 5. *Nunquid est tale ieiunium quod legi, &c.*

Is it such a fast that I haue chosen, that a man should afflict his soule for a day, and to bow downe his head? &c.

Of the Penitentiall fast, wee read in the third Chapter of Ionas, the seventh verse: where the king of the Ninuites at the preaching of Ionas proclaimed a fast in these words, Let neither man nor beast, bullocke nor sheepe taste any thing, neither feede nor drinke water.

Of the fast frō Sursetting, our Saviour Christ himselſe speaketh Luke 21. 34. Take heed (saith hee) to your selues, lest at any time your hearts bee oppressed with sursetting and drunkenesse.

Some there bee that make two  
sorts of fasts.

A Publike fast.

And a Priuate fast.

A Publike fast, is that which is per-  
formed and bled according to the  
Prescription of law, the Comman-  
dement of the superiour, and the  
Custome of the countrey.

A Priuate fast, is that which is  
done voluntarily without any  
constraint or compulsion of the  
Law.

Some there bee, that make 4.  
sorts of fasts.

1. a Mosaicall fast.

2. An Euangelicall or Ecclesiastical  
fast.

3. A couetous fast.

4. A Philosophers fast.

Some there be that make 4. other  
sorts of fasts.

1. A Spirituall fast from sinne.

2. A corporall fast from eating and  
drinking.

3. A fast of necessitie.

4. A Christian and Religious fast.

Of the Spirituall fast from sinne,



We doe read in the 7. Chap. of the  
prophet Zacharie, the 5, 6, 7. verses.

A Corporall fast from eating  
and drinking, is of 3. sorts.

1. Naturall.
2. Super-naturall.
3. Ciuill or Politike.

Naturall is that, which is pre-  
scribed by Physicke, for healths  
sake.

Super-naturall, is as the pro-  
hibition of Saul, which Ionathan was  
angry with, because the people  
wared faint.

Ciuill or politike, is that which  
is for the generall good and bene-  
fit of the whole Common weale.

A fast of Necessitie, is that which  
we cannot auoid, as in the time of  
dearth. That great Scholeman  
Aquinas doth call this fast, *Ieiunium  
iuriij*, a fast, of a fast: because the  
earth forbearth her fruits, we for-  
beare food, and would eate, if wee  
had it.

A Christian or Religious fast, is  
either Common, or ordinarie;  
Speciall, or extraordinary.

Some there be that make seuen  
sorts of fasts, which be these.

1. A Pharasaicall fast.
2. A gluttonous fast.
3. A deceitfull fast.
4. An inordinate fast.
5. A superstitious fast.
6. An hereticall fast.

and 7. a diuelish or satanicall fast.

A Pharasaicall fast, is to fast with  
hypocrisie and dissimulation, to  
get an applause and opinion of  
holinesse among the people, of  
which Christ himselfe speaketh in  
Matth. 6, 16. Moreouer when you  
fast, looke not sowre as the hypocrites,  
for they disfigure their faces, that they  
might seeme vnto men to fast.

A Gluttonous fast, is not to keepe  
the lawes of due temperance in  
fasting. Of which S. Hierome  
writeth in his 2. lib. against Iouinian:  
where some (saith hee) which were  
to fast, the Dinner or Supper be-  
fore they began their fast, would  
eate so much that they were not  
well able to digest it in two dayes  
after.

A Deceitfull fast is to vse wine, or any other meate or drinke before or after meales, *ut fallamus ieiunium*, that wee may deceaue or colen our fast.

An Inordinate fast, is to keepe no order of Christian charitie and wisdom, but to passe over the meane of reason, as well in keeping it, as in leauing it.

A Superstitious fast, is to apply ones selfe rather to the manners of the Jewes, the Saracens & the Mahumetans, then of the Christians; or to thinke one selfe not well to haue fasted, if one breake his fast before the starres appeare in the night. Or to fast in dayes exempt from fasting by the lawes and custome of this Land, not with any good or godly cause, but with contempt and disoaine of them.

An Hereticall fast, is to fast with the custome and minde of the Manichæes, Nouatians, & other Heretikes; or doubtfully to obserue

times which they out of a certaine error haue consecrated to fasting.

A diuelish, a satanicall fast, is to obey the law of fasting, and yet to make no end of sinning, but to continue and perseuere in the wicked custome and delight thereof.

A rare and renowned Diuine of ours, whose iudgement is best to be followed in this matter, doth make thye sorts of fastings :

1. A Morall.
2. A Ciuill.
3. A Religious fast.

Morall fasting, is the practise of sobrietie and temperance : when as in the vse of meates & drinckes, the appetite is so restrained, that it doeth not exceed moderation.

Ciuill fasting, is when vpon some particular and politike considerations, men abstaine from certaine meates. As in this our common weale, the lawe doth enioyne vs to abstaine from flesh meate in this time of Lent, vpon Fridaies and Saterdaies, and other times of the yere.

A Religious fast is, when the dueties of Religion are practised in fasting; as the exercise of Prayer and humiliation.

The effects of Fasting, are either speciall for our selues, or generall for the whole Commonweale. Speciall for our selues; to hyde the wantonnesse of the flesh, and to make it the quicker to Prayer, and to all good woꝝkes. General for the whole Commonweale, to preserve the breed of cattle, to maintaine the princes naue, and the Calling of the Fisherman.

And the like is affirmed by our moderne Diuines, that the principall and right ends of fasting are thre.

1. To make the mind the more attentue in the meditation of the dueties of godlinesse to bee performed.

2. That the rebellion of the flesh may bee subdued: For the flesh being pampered, becomes an instrument of all, and all licentious.

3. To professe our guiltinesse, and to testifie our humiliation before G D D, for our sinnes and offences committed against him.

This is proued by many places of Scripture, as Numb. 30. 14. E. say 5. 11. Rom. 14. 21. where the Apostle saith: *Non est bonum*, It is not good, neither to eat flesh nor drinke wine, whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended.

This is proued by many examples of the Scripture, as of David, Daniel, Tobias, Cornelius, Paul, and others.

This is proued by the testimonie of the ancient fathers, and especially these: of that learned father Saint Austin, lib. 3. Chap. 5. against Faustus, where hee saith: *Non ideo carnes prohibentur quia male sunt, sed quia illarum epula carnis luxuriam gignunt*. Flesh is not therefore forbidden because it is ill, but because the banquetting thereof breedeth riot. Of S. Bernard, who saith: *Abstineo à carnibus, &c.* I doe abstaine from flesh,

Ser. 66.  
sup. Cant.

flesh, lest whiles I doe too much nourish the flesh, I doe also nourish the vices of the flesh. And of Chrysostome in his seventh homilie vpon the first Chapter of Genesis, towards the latter end of the homilie, where hee saith: *Abstergentia propter hoc recepta est.* Abstinence is for this cause receiued, that it may bridle the wantonnesse and riot of the flesh.

The causes of fasting are many, and specially 4.

1. The Holy Ghost.
2. The Commandement of God.
3. Faith.
4. Repentance.

The Holy Ghost is the cause, for three reasons.

1. Because by Nature wee are giuen to gluttony and drunkennesse, which naturall vices wee doe not leaue without the grace of the holy Ghost.

2. Be

2. Because it is not sufficient to abstaine from gluttony and drunkenness, vnlesse the heart doeth also consent thereunto. 3. Because fasting is a good worke, and all good workes are the fruits of the holy Ghost. Gal. 5. 22.

The Commandement of God, is the cause, for 2. reasons. 1. Because it is expressed in the Commandement of the Lord, that wee should abstaine from gluttony and drunkenness. 2. Because the Lord by his commandement both require of vs such Abstinence, and forbids the contrary.

Faith is the cause; because without faith it can not bee well done, nor acceptable vnto the Lord. For whatsoever is without faith, is sinne: and without faith it is impossible to please God.

Repentance is the cause; because fasting is a true signe thereof, and an outward meanes whereby wee doe acknowledge our guiltinesse and vnworthinesse of the least benefits of Almighty God. And there.



therefore the fasting of the Ninivites was a signe of their repentance; and their repentance a signe and fruite of their faith, whereby they beleued the preaching of Ionas.

Thus much what fasting is: how many sorts of fastings there are: Of the Effects of fasting: and the Causes of fasting. Now of the Antiquitie, Dignitie & Necessitie of fasting.

Fasting is no new inuention, nor any late upstart. The Antiquitie of it doeth make it venerable; and the Perpetuitie of it vntil this day doeth highly grace it. Some haue deriued it from Paradise, & made it as auncient as the first man Adam. For the forbidding of the tree of knowledge of good and euill, they say was a law of abstinence.

The Stories of Gentilitie and Poetry, doe shewe the Antiquitie of fasting most plainly. For Ceres had her fast, Iupiter his fast, and Priamus in Homer belwailes the death

death of his sonne Hector with fasting, and in dust. Besides, the Patriarkes vsed it, the Prophets forsooke it not, and our Sauiour Christ and his Disciples departed not from it.

The Dignitie of fasting is great, eminent, and very excellent: for it is the exercise of nature, the practice of Gentilitie, & the Law and the Gospel of Christ himselfe. It is comfortable, Diuine, Medecinable, Spirituall, wholesome, and an instrument to euerie good work. It doeth administer wisdom, it doeth extinguish the wicked desires of the flesh, doeth lift vp the mind to heauen, it doeth vnit man with God, and as Terrullian sayth, It doeth cast out deuils. Nay our Sauiour Christ himselfe so sayth, as wee may read in Matth. 17. 21. where it is said; This kind of deuils is not cast out but by Fasting and Praier.

It is strange to see what the ancient fathers haue written of fasting,

fting, & how much they haue attri-  
 buted thereunto. Athanasius saith, Lib. de  
 That it is the meate of the Angels, and Virg.  
 that hee who doeth vse it, is to bee  
 thought of Angelicall order: Great  
 (sayth hee) is the force of Fasting.  
 Great things and excellent things are  
 done by it, *Basil* saith thereof thus: *Ie.* Ser. i. de  
*iunium Prophetas ingenerat, &c.* Fasting Iciu.  
 doeth breed Prophets, and doeth adde  
 strength to the mightie. In warres it  
 doeth adde fortitude: in peace, it doeth  
 teach quietnesse.

And that I may speake in a  
 word, as many holy fathers  
 as haue bene, thou shalt finde  
 them all to bee directed and  
 guided to leade a life worthy of  
 God, by abstinence and fasting.  
*Isidorus* sayth of it thus: *Est res*  
*sancta, opus celeste, &c.* It is an holy  
 thing, an heauenly worke, a gate of  
 the kingdome, a forme of the king-  
 dome to come: and hee that doeth it  
 well and holily, is alienated from the  
 world, is made spirituall, and is ioyned  
 to God.

The

The Necessitie of fasting is such and so great, that in this our common weale, set dayes and times of Abstinence and fasting, are appointed for ciuill and politike respects; and (as I said before) to maintaine the Princes Naue, to preserue the breed of Cattell, and the calling of the Fisherman.

Of this, I will say euen as a zealous and Religious Diuine of ours saith in the conclusion of the 12. point of Fasting: It were (saith he) to bee wished, that fasting, were more vsed of all Christians, in all places: considering the Lord doeth daily giue vs new and speciall occasions of publike and priuate fasting. These words of our Diuine we find to be true: for the All-great, and Euer-gracious GOD of Heauen, hath of late giuen vnto vs new and speciall occasions of both priuate and publike fasting.

You know, how after the death and dissolution of our late Soueraigne of happy memory Queene Elizabeth, wee all feared great troubles

Perkins  
Refor. Ca-  
thol. pag.  
231.

bles and tumults to arise amongst vs: And yet we saw that our peace and prosperitie was not eclipsed, by reason of our good and godly King, whom the louing Lord of heauen hath placed vpon the seat of this kingdome, to rule his people with a wise and prudent heart.

You know, how the Almighty Lord hath shaken the sword of the deuouring Angell manie yeeres together vpon the Citie of London, and vpon most cities, towne, and villages of this Land, to rowle vs vp (if it might be) from the sleepe of sinne and securitie, and to make vs humble our selues vnto him with fasting, prayer and repentance. You know how mightily and miraculously the same Lord hath deliuered vs out of the very iawes of death and destruction; and from a treason, What treason? A treason of such horroz and monstrous nature, that the tongue of man neuer deliuered the like, the eare of man neuer heard the like, the heart of man  
C . never

neuer conceited the like, and the malice of any earthly and infernall deuill neuer practised the like.

And you know also, how this great Lord hath made the seas & the waters but this last yeere to rage and to roze vpon this Land, with vnheard & vnseen flowings, inundations and risings, to the drowning of Corne and Cattle, Men, women and childre, yea, and of whole Parishes. If now wee doe not conuert from our wicked waies, and giue our selues to fasting, prayer and attendement of our liues, surely, surely, some heauie, yet iust iudgements, yea, some great and grievous plagues and punishments are like to come vpon vs; which God for his mercies sake, Christ for his merits sake, and the Holy Ghost for his Names sake, withdrawe, withhold, and keepe from vs. Thus much of the five Particulars obserued in the Action. Now of the three Particulars and the 2. Questions obserued in the Construction.

What

What Lent is. The name of Lent was not at first idely giuen, nor without great reason & graue consideration. For it doeth signifie a time of forty daies, according to the Greeke and Latine denomination.

Men in ancient times haue reuerenced this number of 40. with so great obseruation, that they celebrated a feast thereof which they called *nonagesima*, a feast of forty daies. This number of fortie hath not lightly been neglected, nor lewdly, nor loosely beene reiected, because it was thought a mysticall and wholesome number, and verie significant in the religiō of expiation, penitencie & great mysteries. For forty daies and forty nights the raine was vpon the earth. After forty daies the waters ceased, and  
 Gen. 7. 4.  
 Gen. 8. 6.  
 Noe opened the windowes of the Ark which he had made. Moses was in the mount, how long? 40. daies  
 Exod. 24.  
 and 40. nights. The destruction  
 18.  
 of the Niniuites was deferred, how long? till after forty daies.

The children of Israel had 40. mansions in the wilderness. The children of Israel were 40. peeres in the wilderness, and before the time of that mysticall number was out, they could not enter into the land of promise. Moses, Elias, and Christ himselfe fasted 40. dayes and forty nights. Our Saviour Christ was forty weekes in the wombe of the blessed Virgin. Forty dayes from his Nativity he remained in Bechleem, because he was offered in the Temple. Forty moneths hee preached publikely. Forty houres he lay in his Sepulchre, and the fortieth day after his Resurrection he ascended into heauen.

At which, some Diuines in times past haue written not to bee done without the secret mysterie and propriety of this number. Also, this number of forty, is a number of affliction and repentance, and therefore the Prophet Ezekiel slept forty dayes upon his right side for the tribe of Juda.

S. Austen doeth call the time of

Of this  
number  
see,

Gen. 6. 3.

and 18. 29.

Numb. 18.

34. & 33. 38

& 13. 26.

Leuit. 12. 4



Lent, *tempus venerabile*, a venerable time. S. Bernard doeth call it, *tempus Christianae militiae*, A time of a Christian warfare. Gratian and others of the ancient fathers doe call it, *Decima dierum*, the tenth of the dayes; Or the imitation of Gods conuersation: because in it wee doe pay vnto God the tenths of the yeare.

Ezek. 4. 6.  
Ser. in Sab.  
ante Qua-  
drag.  
Ser. I. de  
Quadrag.  
Part 3. di-  
stinct. 5.  
fol. 579.

Some of the ancient fathers haue gone so farre, that they haue thought Lent not to be an humane institution, but a diuine and apostolicall tradition, and first brought into the Church by y<sup>e</sup> Apostle Peter. Where as likely & somewhat probable it is, that the first Institutiō of Lent was by Telesphorus, the 6. Pope in Rome, as some doe reckon him, a thousand foure hundred and threescore yeares since and more. For this Telesphorus first ordained that full seuen weekes before Easter all Clarke's should fast frō flesh, because (as they then thought) there ought to be a difference in fasting, euen as the life of the Clergie ought to bee differing

Platyna in  
vit. Telef-  
phori.

from the life of the Laitie, which time was called Quinquagesima, as Gratian writeth, 1. part. distinct. 5.

This time of Lent in ancient times hath beene diuersly begun, diuersly obserued, and about it there haue beene diuers contentions and controuersies. The Easterne Church beganne their Lent on Quinquagesima. Other some beganne it on Sexagesima, as in the time of Bede. Some other on Quadragesima, as Mediolanum, & all Greece. Some vpon Ashe-wensday, and some vpon an other time.

This time, in times past also hath bin diuersly obserued. Some in this time haue abstained from all things which had life in them, as Pythagoras did. Some haue eaten onely birds. Some haue eaten onely fishes. Some haue abstained from egges and all kinde of flesh meate; And some haue eaten nothing but dry meate, as Socrates doeth write, lib. 9. Chap. 38.

There haue beene also diuers contentions and controuersies about the continuance of this time

how long it should be fasted: when some would fast but one day, some two daies, some a weeke, some 2. weeks, some more, & some 40. daies as Irenæus writeth, lib. 5. Chap. 24.

By reason of these differences and diuersities about this time of Lent, and because this time was first ordained and confirmed in the Church of Rome, and yet is specially obserued therein: some there be that count this time a time of superstition, & would haue no Lent at all, scorning in very lawfull policies to be imitators of the Papacir; and like self-witted Captaines disdaining to vse any stratageme vsed before of the enemy, although the putting of it in exploit might giue them assured victory.

To such kind of people, that may well and truly be said, which our Kings most excellent Maiestie spake at the conference at Hampton Court. No Church (said his Maiesty) ought farther to separate it self from the Church of Rome, either in doctrine, or in ceremony, then she hath departed from her self, when she was in her flourishing

**O**f that which reuerend Hooker doeth write in his 5. lib. of Ecclesi. Poll. It is not our best pollicie (saith he) for the establishment of sound Religion, in all things to haue no agreement with the Church of Rome, although vnfound,

The end and purpose why and wherefoze Lent was first ordai-  
ned, was, not onely to p̄serue the  
breede of Cattell, to maintaine the  
Princes Nauie, and the Calling  
of the Fisherman, but especially  
foz the worthy receiuing of the  
blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist  
oꝝ Lords Supper. For in the be-  
ginning of the primatiue Church,  
many came to the holy mysteries  
promiscuously without any p̄para-  
ration. Which when the ancient  
fathers vnderstood, and saw the  
great harme and hurt that did a-  
rise of that negligent comming to  
that holy Table, they established a  
P̄paratiō oꝝ Coꝛrectiō, & decreed  
foꝛty dayes of fasting, p̄aying,  
hearing of the Woꝛd of God, and  
comming to the Church: that in  
those dayes the people being dili-  
gently

ἀπολαύει καὶ  
ὡς ἱερεὺς.

gently purged by praier, by fasting, by teares, by compassion, and by other such meanes, they might come to these holy mysteries with purer consciences and better deuotion.

The time of Lent was ordained at this time of the yeere, in the Spring time, for three reasons.

1. By reason of heate encreasing, and abundance of humors or moisture growing or comming on.

2. To preserve breed and encrease: because at this time there is a generall breed and encrease of all things.

3. Because of the feast of the Lords Resurrection, which requireth a peculiar Preparation. For the general receiuing of the Eucharist or Lords Supper, did alwaies fall out in the Spring time.

I might speake more and much of these Particulars, but I will conclude them with the saying of a worthy & praise-worthie Knight in a booke which he writeth of the relation of the religion of the west parts

parts of the world, where he saith thus : I am so far off (saith he) from thinking the institution of Lēnt to be superfluous, or the restraint in it vnprofitable, that I rather encline to the custome of the Greeke Church, who besides their great Lent, haue three other Lents also in the yeere, though the other neither so long, nor in them so strict an obseruation. Thus much of the 3. Particulars. Now of the two Questions. The first Question.

Whether set daies and times of abstinence and fasting ought to be commanded by authoritie.

**F**astings are either of mens own free & voluntary accord, as their particular deuotion doeth moue them thereunto ; or els they are publike ly enioyned in the Church, and required at the hands of all men. Montanus (as Eusebius writeth) was the first authoꝝ of these appointed times of fasting, & of this *regulation*, of this set lawe-making of fasting. Foꝝ which cause manie there bee that reiect and renounce the same. But most certaine and assured it is, that set daies and

times of fasting appointed in spirituall considerations to bee kept of Christian people, toke not their beginning either from Montanus, or from any other whose heresies may prejudice the credit & due estimation thereof, but haue their ground in the law of nature; are allowable in Gods sight, were in all ages heretofore vsed, and may till the worlds end be obserued, not without singular vble and benefit.

They haue their ground in the law of nature, because they teach vs to keepe order and moderation, sobrietie and temperance in our meates and drinckes. For nature doeth content her selfe with a litle. Nature is our best guide, which if we follow, we shal neuer go astray. And therefore Cyncas the Philosopher was of this opinion, that when the gods framed Nature, they went beyond their owne skil, why? because the maker (quoth hee) is subiect to ything made. They are allowable in Gods sight, because they are daies partly of pēsiue humiliation and sorrow, and partly

a signe of duety, deuotion, and reuerence towards God.

They were in all ages heeretofoze vlsd foze pzeuention of disorders and riot, foze the pzeeruatiō of Cattell, and the maintenance of Sea-faring men, because the decay of the one, and the waste of the other, could not well bee pzeuented without such politike order and consideration.

They may till the worlds end be obserued not without singular vls & benefit, because they draw men to penitency, to temperance, to sobriety, to all Chyrstian duety and deuotion, and to the generall good, and publike profit of the whole Common-weale.

Some there bee that would proue set dayes and times of Abstinence and fasting out of the Scripture, and specially out of these places; Leuit. 16. 29. The tenth day of the seuenth moneth, ye shal humble your soules. Leuit. 23. 27. The tenth day of this seuenth moneth, shalbe a day of reconciliation, And Zach. 7. 5.

When



When yee fasted and mourned in the  
5. and 7. moneth.

Trueth it is, that these set and  
prescribed fasts in Leuiticus were  
commanded of God, as a part of  
a legall worship, which had their  
end in the death of Christ. And  
trueth it is also that the fasts spo-  
ken of by the Prophet Zacharie were  
appointed vpon occasion of the  
present afflictions of the Church  
in Babilon, which ceased vpon their  
deliuerance. But our set daues  
and times of Abstinence and fa-  
sting are appointed and comman-  
ded to be obserued, not for consci-  
ence or religions sake, but for Ci-  
uill and Politike regards; and not  
for the priuate good, but for the  
generall good of the whole Com-  
mon-weale. Which if they were  
left to the peoples owne choise, li-  
bertie and will, it may some bee  
coniectured what would follow  
thereof: because the corruption of  
the time is such, and the wickednes  
of mans nature is so exorbitant,  
that it is a hard matter to hold the

ordinarie sort of people within the lists of duetie, obedience, and good order, without the comādemēt of the superiour, and the seueritie of good lawes. For which cause very necessary it is, yea a good and godly thing it is, that set daies & times of abstinence and fasting should be appointed and commanded by authoritie. Which no one will dislike or disaīne, vnlesse hee bee like vnto Acrius, who opposed himselfe against fasting, and said: These set fasts away with them, they are Iewish, and bring men vnder the yoke of seruitude. If I will fast, let me chuse my time to fast, that Christian libertie be not abridged.

Ephipha.  
h2r.75.

I might prosecute this Question more at large, but I hope euerie charitable Christian, and equally minded man and woman is heere in satisfied. And therefore I will conclude it with this argument or this syllogisme.

Whatsoever is for the general good and publike profit of the whole Cōmonweale,

weale, that ought to bee appointed  
and commanded by authoritie:

But set dayes and times of Abstinence  
and fasting are for the generall good  
and publike profit of the whole  
Common-weale.

Therefore they ought to bee appointed  
and commanded by authoritie.

### The other Question.

Whether it be a sinne wilfully to breake  
and to despise set daies and times of  
Abstinence and fasting commanded  
by Authoritie.

To hold this question affirmati-  
uely, may peradventure seeme vn-  
to some a Paradox, or rather a grosse  
errour and grievous absurdity.  
But seeing Kings and Princes  
are Christs deputies here on earth  
to gouerne the world, and in the  
Scripture are called gods: See-  
ing Christ willed his disciples to  
beware of offences; and seeing S.  
Paul willed þe Corinthians to giue no  
offence

offence neither to the Iewes, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God; I can not chuse but believe and say, that it is a sinne wilfully and without cause to breake and despise set daies and times of Abstinence and fasting commanded by Authozite; and this shall bee proued vnto you by 6. speciall arguments.

1. By the fift Commandement.
2. By the testimony of S. Paul. Rom.

13. I.

3. By the definition of Sinne.
4. By Examples,
5. By the Ancient Fathers.
6. By generall Councils.

This is proued by the fift Commandement. In the 5. Commandement, which is the first Commandement of the second Table, we are commanded to honour our Parents: where, by honour is meant, loue, feare, and obedience; and by our Parents not onely our naturall Parents, but all Kings, Princes, Gouvernours, and Superiours which doe rule vs. Well then

then, if we wilfully breake and despise set daies and times of abstinence and fasting commaunded by Authoritie, we doe not honour our Superiours. If wee doe not honour our Superiours, we breake this Commandement. If wee breake this Commandement, I hope none will deny but we sinne.

This is proued by the testimony of S. Paul, Rom. 13.1. where the Apostle saith; Let euery soule be subiect to the higher power. Why? because there is no power but of God. We must not (saith he) resist the power: for if we resist the power, we resist the ordinance of God. They that resist, what shall they receiue? They shall receiue to themselves iudgement. Where- hence I frame this argument. Whosoever doeth resist the power, doth resist the ordinance of God. But they that wilfullie breake and despise set daies and times of abstinence and fasting commanded by Authoritie, doe resist the power. Therefore they doe resist the ordinance of God. If therein  
D they

they doe resist the ordinance of God, who can deny but that they sinne?

This is proued by the definition of sinne. To sinne, as S. Austen saith, is *facere quod non licet*, to do that which is not lawfull to doe. Here-  
hence I drawe this argument: Whosoeuer doe that which is not lawfull, doe sinne: but they which wilfully breake and despise set daies and times of Abstinence and fasting commanded by Authoritie, doe that which is not lawfull; therefore they doe sinne:

This is proued by Examples.  
Gen. 2. 17. Adam in Paradise was commanded of the Lord not to eate of the tree of knowledge of good and euill: If hee did, hee should die the death.

Leuit. 10. 9 Aarons sonnes were commanded of the Lord, not to drinke wine, nor strong drinke in their ministrie: which commandement because they brake, they were slaine.

1. Reg. 13. The man of God, that came out of Iuda was slaine by a Lion, because

cause being seduced by the false Prophet, hee did eate bread, and drinke water in his house, contrary to the Lords Commandement.

Saul would haue put his sonne Jonathan to death, because ignorantly he tooke a little honny contrary to his commandement. If Adam, Aarons sonnes, and the Prophet of God were punished of the Lord for their not abstinence: and if Jonathan was in so great danger, for breaking his fathers commandement in eating a little honny: Is it not a sinne before God for vs, wilfully to breake and to despise set daies and times of Abstinence, and fasting commanded by Authoritie, seeing wee are commanded of the Lord to submit our selues to our Princes ordinances: and bound in conscience truely and vnfeinedly to obey them?

Let vs yet goe further.  
D<sup>2</sup> The

The noble kings Ezekias, Iehosaphat and Iosias, made lawes for the exercise and the recalling of Gods seruice. That Christian and religious Empero<sup>r</sup> Constantine made lawes also in things pertaining to holinesse towards God and towards his Church. Theodosius his successour, tooke the same course. King Alured o<sup>r</sup> Alfred appointed and commanded set daies and times of abstinence and fasting. And so did king Edgar, Anno Dom. 958.

Had it beene a sinne for people in those daies to haue broken these their Princes lawes and ordinances, wilfully, wantonly, and without cause: and shall we thinke that it is not a sinne for vs in these daies to doe the like?

This is proued by the testimony of the ancient fathers. Most certaine and assured it is that Austen, Ambrose, and other of the ancient fathers were of this mind, and thought it a sinne wilfully to break and to despise set daies and times  
of



of Abstinence and fasting commanded by Authoritie. S. Austen <sup>de temp. Ser. 62.</sup> calleth them new teachers that shut out the merite of fasting, and asketh what saluation we can obtaine if we blot not out our sinnes by fasting, seeing (saith hee) the Scripture saith, that fasting and almesdeeds doeth deliuer from sinne, *Alijs diebus ieiunare (saith he) remedium est aut premium, &c.* To fast on other daies is a remedie or reward: but not to fast in Lent is a sinne. S. Ambr. in ser. 25. de Quadrag. saith thus among many other things, *Non leue est peccatum.* It is no small sinne to breake a fast that is commanded.

Although these two ancient fathers had their errors, and in some sort thought corruptly of fasting: yet I will say of them and of their opinion concerning fasting, as reuerend master Hooker saith, lib. 5. Eccle. pol. Ecclesiast. Pollicie. Concerning euery lib. 5. pag. mans duety herein (saith he) that which 108. Austen and Ambrose are alleadged to haue done, is such, that all men fauouring equitie must needs allow, and fol-

low it also if they affect peace. Well then, if according to master Hookers judgement all men must needs allow this opinion of these two fathers, if they favour equitie and affect peace: then I hope I may say, that it is a sinne wilfully and without cause to breake and to despise set daies and times of Abstinence and fasting commanded by Authozitie.

This is prooued by generall Councils, and specially by that of Chalcedon held in the yeere of our Lord 454. to confound the error of Eutiches, who held, that in Christ, God and Man make but one Nature.

Canon 35. The Councell of Mentz vnder Charles the great, made this decree. *Si quis indictum ieiunium superbiendo contempserit, &c.* If any one shall with pride contemne fasting commanded, and will not obserue it with other Christians, let him be accursed.

The like was established by the Councell of Carthage in their 63. Canon

Canon, By the Councell of Laodiceen in their 50. Canon, and by the Councell of Toletan in their 7. Canon.

If those Councels thought them fit to bee accursed and excommunicate, that would not obserue fasting commanded by Authority; shall not wee thinke, that they thought it a sinne in them that did wilfully breake and despise the same?

I might stand longer, and much longer vpon this question, but I will conclude it with the saying of the Apostle S. Peter, & say vnto you euen as the Apostle Peter said to the Jewes, 1. Epist. 2. 13, and 14. Submit your selues to all manner of ordinance of man, &c.

But some peradventure may say, you haue spoken nothing of Imber Fasts, and Fasts on Saints Eues. What can you say of them? are not they altogether idle, superstitious, and to bee abolished?

I pray you giue mee leaue and I will speake somewhat of them also. And 1. I will shew you why they were so called. 2. By whom they were first ordained. And 3. the occasion why they were ordained.

They were called Imber-daies vpon no other reason and occasiō, but of eating bread baked vnder Imbers or ashes. Whosoever doth say otherwise, saies it either of malice or ignorance. For the people vpon those dayes vsed to fast, and to eate nothing but bread baked vnder Imbers. Which they did for two causes. First, to pay vnto God at such times, the tithes of their soules & bodies, in thanksgiuing for the fruites of the earth, and the fruites of his grace. Secondly, that the holy Ghost might the more plenteously bee poured downe vpon them which receiue holy orders. For the Sunday after these Imber-fasts, and at no time els, alwaies hath bene, and yet still is the ordering of ministers by the Bishops.

Some refer the first institution of these Imber-fasts to Pope Urbanus Some to Calixtus the 2. And some say, that they were first confirmed in the Cosicel of Mentz, held vnder Charles the great, of which I spake but now, for this intent, that people vpon those daies should come to the Church, should fast to the 9. houre, and abstaine from flesh and all things els.

But most certaine it is, that these Imber-fasts are most ancient, haue bene most common, and in all the Christian world most religiously obserued foure times of the yeere: and therefore they are called *ieiunia quatuor temporu*, the fasts of the foure times, because of the foure speciall turnings of the sun, the first about the Spring Equinoctiall, the second about the Summer Solstice, the third about the Equinoctiall in autumnne, and the 4. about the winter Solstice. And vpon these three daies of the weeke, the Wenddaies, the Fridaies, and the Saterdaies: because our Sa-  
niour

uiour Christ was solde vpon a Wednesday, crucified vpon a Friday, died vpon a Saturday, and rested in his sepulcher. These reasons haue beene alleadged heeretofore for the institution and obseruation of these Iember-fasts.

The eues of Saints-dates are called in Latine Vigiliae, which is, watchings; because in the time of the Apostles, and a long time after, watchings, prayers, and almes-deeds, were accustomed to be ioyned to fastings. These fasts on saints eues were not at first idely inuented, and haue not in times past beene fondly nor foolishly obserued. And they haue beene set

Eccle. Pol.  
lib. 5. pag.  
314.

(as master Hooker writeth, as vshers of festiuall dates for prevention of disorders as much as might be: which may bee kept not without great good to the keepers, and singular vse and benefite to the whole Common-weale.

Concerning which, as the Apostle S. Paul said to the Corinthians,  
so

to say I vnto you : Let all things bee done honestly and according to order. Great is the dignitie of order, and therefore the Apostle saith, Let all things. Great is the necessity of order : and therefore the Apostle saith, Let all things be done. Great is the eminency and the excellency of order ; and therefore the Apostle concludeth his Chapter with the same.

Will you haue common dutie kept which Nature requireth : then let all things be done honestly, and according to order. Will you haue common law regarded which Pollicie willet : then let all things bee done honestly and according to order. Will you keepe your goods, your houses and all things that you haue, in peace, quietnesse and prosperitie : then let all things bee done honestly, and according to order. Will you be faithfull and firme, louing and loyall subiects to our gracious Soueraigne : then let all things bee done honestly, and according to order.

And will you haue all things to go well with you, and to prosper well with you in this world? then let all things be done honestly, and according to order. Without this order, there is no duety, no deuotion, no charitie, no concord, no law, no loue, no peace, plentie no? prosperitie, no grace, goodnesse, no? any godlinesse, although we heare neuer so much, know neuer so much, talke, debate and dispute of diuinitie neuer so much. Thus much of the matter: Now of the application and the vses.

2. Tim. 3. 16

Because all Scripture is giuen by inspiration, & is profitable (as the Apostle Paul telleth vs) to teach, to improue, to correct, and to instruct in righteousnesse; we ought heere to follow the example of Dauid, and to chasten our selues with fasting as he did, although by some it bee turned to our repzoose. Of which his fasting, Humiliation was the cause, euen as diuine speculation was the cause of Moses so long fasting in the Mount.



For in the holy Scriptures wee  
 reade how not only Kings fasted,  
 as Dauid and Iehosaphat, but Pro-  
 phets fasted, as Moses, Elias & Daniel:  
 women fasted, as Anna, Hester, Lu-  
 dith and Sara Raguels daughter: the  
 childe of Israel fasted, the inhabi-  
 tants of Gabish Gilead fasted: the  
 Apostles fasted: Saints, Fathers  
 and Confessors fasted: yea, the  
 very heathen (as wee reade) fa-  
 sted, as Iupiters priests in Create; with  
 the greatest Philosophers Ancisthe-  
 nes, Pythagoras, and Socrates. But  
 in these our daies it is strange to  
 see, the scozne and the scandall, the  
 contempt and the disdaine which  
 many make of fasting: in so much  
 that if a man or a woman doeth  
 but for ciuill and politike respects  
 obserue and keepe set daies and  
 times of Abstinence and fasting  
 commanded by authoritie, he shall  
 be of some reproched and reprovied  
 for it, & he shall be of some thought  
 to bee popish and superstitious.  
 Wee are all now growen to excesse  
 and to extremities, to lust, liber-  
 tie,

tie, and licentiousnesse. We are all for the most part giuen to gluttonie and gourmandice, to securitie, sensualitie, and surfetting. We are all now growen to bee Epicures, to be Diuorites, and to loue the two daughters of the horse-leach, although they sucke out all the blood of our bodie.

The best feastmaker, is thought with some to be the best Christian, and the least faster, is thought with some not to bee the least professor. Wee care not for the preservation of the breed of Cattell, the maintenance of the Kings Majesties Hauie, or the Calling of the Fisherman. Wee care not for any good Lawes or Statutes whatsoeuer, that enioine vs to Abstinence and fasting, but like Helio-gabalus, we will be our own heires, and make an end of all things our selues: like the children of Israel when they were without Kings, we will doe that which is good in our owne eyes: and like the two  
sonnes

sonnes of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu  
we will offer strange fire, although  
we be burned in the flames there-  
of. Worshippfull, and beloued in  
the Lord, Men, brethren and fa-  
thers, I pray you giue me leaue to  
say thus much vnto you: The  
wisest and the worthiest men of  
this Land are perswaded, that the  
not Abstinance, fasting, and meane  
diet, is the occasion of so many  
great, grieuous, and outragious  
sinnes which are committed a-  
mongst vs. There was neuer  
more teaching, more preaching,  
more lawes and more Statutes,  
and yet neuer more excesse, more  
intemperance, more riot, more  
surfetting, more hypocrisie and  
dissimulation, & neuer worse and  
worse living. The world is bold  
to surfet, and hath taken an habite  
to fry in words, but to freeze in  
deeds; & to bee rather a disputant  
than an agent in Religion, and to  
count sinnes, no sins, but to turne  
them from sinnes, to trades and  
occupations.

The

The world doeth blush, and doeth  
 scorne to fast, because it thinkes it  
 to be an abridgement of Christian  
 libertie, to bee Jewish, a Montani-  
 zing, and rather the bewraving of  
 a disease then the exercising of a  
 vertue. and therefore some say as  
 they did in the 2. Chap. of Wis-  
 dome: Come, let vs enioy the pleasures  
 which are present, and let vs cheerefully  
 vse the creatures as in youth, &c.

Horat. ad  
 Lollium  
 epistol.  
 lib. 1.

Some say as they did of whom  
 the Poet writeth: Wee are a num-  
 ber, and we are borne to consume, and  
 eat frutes, and fill our bellies.

Some againe will fast, but  
 when: when they list themselves,  
 and not otherwise. For when we  
 fast, they will feast: and when we  
 feast, then they will fast; And out  
 of Lent they will eat flesh-meate,  
 though not vpon other daies, yet  
 vpon Fridaies and Saterdaies;  
 and in the time of Lent, they will  
 eat flesh-meate seuen daies in the  
 weeke: behauing themselves ther-  
 in much like vnto them, to whom  
 it was sayd by our Saviour Christ  
 him.

selfe: We haue piped to you, and yee  
 haue not danced: we haue mourned to  
 you, and yee haue not wept. Some  
 againe will keepe extraordinary  
 fasts; but how? without the know-  
 ledge and authoritie of the Maie-  
 strate, to preuent his decree, and  
 controle his gouernment. To  
 such kind of persons, that may wel  
 and truely bee said which a reue-  
 rend and learned Doctor hath  
 written: A wilfull law-breaker, would  
 willingly breake the law-giuer: that  
 is, he that is not a friend and wel-  
 willer to the Princes lawes, can  
 not be a friend and welwiller to  
 the Prince himselfe. Many good  
 and wholesome lawes and Sta-  
 tutes haue beene made and enac-  
 ted to bydle the lust and libertie of  
 people in this point, as in the 5.  
 and 13. yeere of our late Queene  
 ELIZABETH, and in the first  
 yeere of our now gracious dread  
 Soueraign King JAMES; which  
 acte, because it specially con-  
 cerned this matter, and is fit and  
 necessary to be heard, known and  
 under-

Of obedi-  
 ence or  
 Ecclesiasti-  
 call vnion.  
 sect. 19, fol.  
 62.

vnderstood of all heere present, I wil read vnto you as it is set down in the booke.

You which are now in place and authoritie, looke to this good Act, and to the due execution thereof, as you ought to doe. First you your selues, giue good examples thereof in your houses, to your children, to your seruants, and in other places also where you come. Look to those Butchers, and that without all fauour or partialitie, that shall offend heerein, and to those Tauerneers, Inne-keepers & Ale-house-keepers, which make a common course and custome of offending heerein, and that without any feare or intermission.

You which are Parents, giue good examples thereof to your children: and all you which are masters, mistresses, and dames of houses and families, giue good examples thereof to your seruants, to your apprentises, and to others that are with you.

Let the superiour sort giue good  
exam-

examples thereof to the inferiour,  
the richer to the poozer, and the  
elder to the yonger, without the  
honny of hypocrisie, or the leauen  
of malicioulnesse, contempt or  
wilfulnesse; that wee may all liue  
in the feare, die in the fauour, rest  
in the peace, rise in the power,  
and remaine at last in e-  
uerlasting glorie with  
Jesus Christ our  
Saviour, to  
whom, &c.

F I N I S.

